Please find below some comments on the 2016 Internet Governance Forum and some suggestions for the preparatory process for the 2017 meeting.  
  
**A) Taking Stock of 2016 programming, preparatory process, community intersessional activities and the 11th annual IGF: What worked well? What worked not so well?**  
  
More work needs to be done in ensuring that workshop rooms are assigned appropriately and with plenty of notice of late changes.  Two workshops that I was involved with were placed in a room that was far too small, which drove would-be participants away.  
  
One of these workshops had been listed in the printed schedule in a larger room, and participants who had not noticed the change in the online schedule had no forewarning of the change until the workshop was about to begin.  Apparently the event that had taken over the larger room had insisted on being given a larger space, notwithstanding that it ultimately had fewer participants.  Worse, IGF volunteers present in the originally-assigned room were apparently unaware of the change, resulting in much confusion by participants and organizers.  
  
I was also involved in preparations for two of this year's main sessions.  It is understandable that the MAG takes a more hand-on role in the development of main sessions, however in the case of the session on Trade and the Internet, this was taken to excess.  The MAG went to the extent of micro-managing how many and which speakers there should be, how the session should be titled, what the agenda should look like, and so on.  The actual subject matter experts attempting to organize the session did not find this level of intervention helpful at all.  
  
There was also a lack of clarity about what details the MAG could require from the main session organizing team in order to approve the session.  The original main session application form only seemed to require a description of the theme of the session, how it fulfilled a set of criteria for main sessions, and some details of how it would be organized.  Yet even after supplying these details, feedback from the MAG suggested that we were also expected to have finalised our speaker and agenda before the main session could be approved.  This was confusing and inconsistent with the treatment of other main sessions.  
  
**B) Suggestions for improvements in 2017? (programming, preparatory processes, community intersessional activities and improvements for 12th annual meeting)**  
  
The MAG should take less active role in programming main sessions.  The main role of the MAG should simply be to approve the theme of the session, and then to take a step back to allow space for the organizers to do their work without interference.  Although there should be one or more liaisons from the MAG on each main session organizing committee, it should not be expected that these liaisons should necessarily lead that committee, and it should not be necessary for them to obtain approval from the MAG for every detail of the session.  In particular the issue of panelist selection is too easily politicized within the MAG, with demands that certain favoured speakers or groups be selected even if they do not have subject matter expertise.  
  
Looking at the bigger picture, the IGF needs to continue to address its inability to fulfil the mandate in paragraph 72(g) of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, which requires it to "Identify emerging issues, bring them to the attention of the relevant bodies and the general public, and, where appropriate, make recommendations".  Even more than a decade after its formation, the IGF has still failed to develop the capacity to fulfil this crucial paragraph of its mandate, despite much discussion about how it could do so, and a few tentative steps taken.  But comparing these steps to the achievements of the NETmundial on a much shorter lead-time reveals how the IGF has fallen short.  
  
The building blocks for addressing this deficiency at the IGF are already in place.  For example, the team from Stanford University that has organized events on Deliberative Polling at the IGF have demonstrated how the use of deliberative democratic practices can yield measurably higher quality outcomes.  In parallel, the Dynamic Coalitions have been experimenting with online and offline feedback forms to gauge the support of the broader IGF community for the Dynamic Coalition outcomes.  These supplement the similar document review platform that exists for the MAG-led Best Practice Forums.  
  
Putting these building blocks together, the IGF could adopt a process whereby Best Practice Forums and Dynamic Coalitions alike could host the development of draft outputs for the IGF that would be developed on an open, multi-stakeholder basis, much as they do now.  Each year one or more of those draft outputs (perhaps selected to complement the meeting's theme) could be taken to the "next level" by subjecting it to a well-resourced, officially-supported and professionally facilitated process of democratic deliberation that would take place during a main session.  In order to make the deliberation as inclusive as possible, this main session should not be scheduled at the same time as any workshops, and should include remote and asynchronous participation options.  
  
This could result in the identification of points of consensus, documented under supervision of the MAG, that the chair of the meeting could recognise as a non-binding recommendation of the IGF, thereby fulfilling the neglected paragraph 72(g) of the IGF's mandate.